



# PRESS RELEASE

## Internal Revenue Service - Criminal Investigation *Chief Richard Weber*

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Contact: \*CI-HQ-COMMUNICATIONSEDUCATION@ci.irs.gov  
IRS – Criminal Investigation

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### **Alabama Resident Indicted for Stolen Identity Tax Refund Fraud Scheme**

An Alabama resident was arrested today after being indicted on Dec. 9 by a federal grand jury sitting in Montgomery, Alabama, on 15 counts of wire fraud, 15 counts of aggravated identity theft and two counts of passing U.S. Treasury checks with a false endorsement, announced Acting Assistant Attorney General Caroline D. Ciraolo of the Justice Department's Tax Division and U.S. Attorney George L. Beck, Jr. of the Middle District of Alabama.

According to the allegations in the indictment, James Vernon Battle, a resident of Montgomery County, used stolen personal identification information to prepare and file false federal income tax returns for tax years 2013 and 2014 for the purpose of obtaining fraudulent tax refunds. Battle directed the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) to issue the requested refunds by depositing the funds onto prepaid debit cards and by issuing U.S. Treasury checks.

If convicted, Battle faces a statutory maximum sentence of 20 years in prison for each count of wire fraud, a mandatory minimum sentence of two years in prison for aggravated identity theft and a statutory maximum sentence of 10 years in prison for each count of passing a U.S. Treasury check with a false endorsement. He also faces substantial monetary penalties and restitution.

Acting Assistant Attorney General Ciraolo and U.S. Attorney Beck commended special agents of IRS-Criminal Investigation and the U.S. Secret Service, who investigated the case, and Trial Attorneys Michael C. Boteler and Robert J. Boudreau of the Tax Division and Assistant U. S. Attorney Jonathan Ross of the Middle District of Alabama, who are prosecuting this case.

An indictment merely alleges that crimes have been committed. The defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.

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